

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 were pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 11 are canceled, claims 2-5, 8-10, 12-16, and 18-20 are amended, and new claims 22-31 are added. The claim amendments and new claims are supported by the specification, claims, and figures as filed. No new matter is entered by this paper.

Allowable subject matter

Applicant acknowledges with thanks the Examiner's determination that claims 3-9 recite allowable subject matter.

Claim amendments

Claims 3, 4, 5, and 8 are each rewritten in independent form to recite all of the features of original claim 1 and any respective intervening claims. Claims 2, 9, 12-16, and 18-20 are amended to change their respective claim dependencies as a result of the cancellation of claim 1. Applicant reserves the right to re-present cancelled claims or claims as originally filed or previously presented in this or another patent application.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Applicant has canceled claim 11, so the rejection is moot. Withdrawal is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-2, 10, and 12-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,438,128 to Nieuwkerk et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,057,438 to Imai et al.

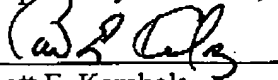
In response, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection. Claim 1 has been cancelled, and the other rejected claims are allowable or depend ultimately from an allowable independent claim.

Rejoinder of claims 20 and 21

Claims 20 and 21 depend from claims 3 and 19, respectively. As a result, they should be rejoined. See M.P.E.P. § 821.04 ("withdrawn process claims which depend from... the allowable product claim will be rejoined").

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